

Message Text

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21-12

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-10 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 DRC-01 ISO-00 /156 W

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R 072319Z SEP 73

FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9291

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 3109

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RQ, IN, UN

SUBJ: PUERTO RICO IN UN COMMITTEE OF 24: INDIAN ROLE

REF: USUN 3053 AND PREVIOUS

1. ON SEPT. 6, MISOFF HAD LONG BUT INCONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION
OF PUERTO RICO WITH INDIAN SECOND SECRETARY LAHIRI.

2. MISOFF SAID USG VERY DISAPPOINTED BY INDIAN VOTE
IN FAVOR OF RESOLUTION UNFAIRLY IMPLYING THAT US RELATION-
SHIP TO PUERTO RICO HAS COLONIALTAINT. MISOFF NOTED THAT
INDIA, UNLIKE VIRTUALLY ALL OTHER NATIONS VOTING IN FAVOR OF
RESOLUTION, HAS DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT BASED ON FREE
ELECTIONS AND SHOULD, THEREFORE, BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THAT
PUERTO RICANS DEMONSTRATE THEIR VIEWS ON POLITICAL
STATUS AT THE POLLS. MISOFF SAID, THAT INDIA'S SUPPORT OF
RESOLUTION PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND BECAUSE
LAHIRI'S EXPLANATION OF VOTE IN COMMITTEE CLEARLY JUSTIFIES
ABSTENTION OR NEGATIVE VOTE. MISOFF REGRETTE THAT IN SPITE
OF LENGTHY TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS WHICH AMBASSADORS SCALI
AND SCHAUFELER HAD WITH INDIAN PERM REP SEN IN LAST FEW
WEEKS STRESSING SERIOUSNESS OF US CONCERN ABOUT COMITE ACTION
ON PR, INDIANS HAD IN EFFECT VOTED FOR INCREASED COMITE
INVOLVEMENT WITH ISSUE. MISOFF ALSO EXPRESSED REGRET

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THAT INDIAN MISOFF AHMAD'S EFFORTS AT COMPROMISE HAD NOT

BEEN MADE SOONER.

3. LAHIRI SAID INDIANS REGARDED RESOLUTION AS RELATIVELY INNOCUOUS ONE WHICH SHOULD NOT "PREJUDGE" COMMITTEE'S EVENTUAL DECISION ON PUERTO RICO. LAHIRI AGREED THAT COMMITTEE OF 24 STILL BOUND BY UNGA'S 1953 RES. ON P.R. AND INDICATED INDIA WOULD HAVE PREFERRED MAKING REFERENCE TO IT IN PREAMBULAR PART OF LAST WEEK'S RESOLUTION.

4. LAHIRI SEEMED RELATIVELY UNINTERESTED IN DETAILS OF US-PUERTO RICO RELATIONSHIP. HE PRESSED HOWEVER FOR EVALUATION OF EFFECT OF COMMITTEE OF 24 ACTION ON US RELATIONSHIP TO UN AS WELL AS US FUTURE HANDLING OF PUERTO RICO ISSUE. LAHIRI EXPRESSED VIEW THAT PUERTO RICO ISSUE WILL REMAIN WITH COMMITTEE FOR LONG TIME TO COME. HE CONCLUDED WITH NONSEQUITUR THAT INDIANS NOT HAPPY WITH OUTCOME OF THIS YEAR'S COMMITTEE DEBATE ON PUERTO RICO.

5. COMMENT: WE REMAIN AS MYSTIFIED AS EVER BY INDIA'S POSITION ON PUERTO RICO THIS YEAR SINCE IT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO RECONCILE INDIA'S VOTE IN FAVOR OF RES. WITH EITHER INDIA'S STATEMENT IN COMMITTEE OR ITS LAST MINUTE BEHIND THE SCENES EFFORT TO WATER DOWN RES. (WHICH WE UNDERSTAND INFURIATED THE CUBANS). WE BELIEVE IT FUTILE TO PURSUE ISSUE HERE AND NOW RECOMMEND RAISING BOTH IN WASHINGTON AND IN NEW DELHI VOTE ON PUERTO RICO IN CONTEXT US-INDIAN BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. SCALI

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973USUNN03109
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS SCALI
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730947/aaaabips.tel
Line Count: 88
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: USUN 3053 AND PREVIOUS
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10-Oct-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <10-Dec-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PUERTO RICO IN UN COMMITTEE OF 24: INDIAN ROLE
TAGS: PFOR, RQ, IN, UN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005